

HOME (/) / COMMITTEES (/COMMITTEES/) / CANADIAN HERITAGE (/COMMITTEES/CANADIAN-HERITAGE/) /
2026 (/COMMITTEES/CANADIAN-HERITAGE/2026/) / JUNE 9 (/COMMITTEES/CANADIAN-HERITAGE/45-1/42/ANGEL-BLANCO-1/) /
ANGEL BLANCO (MASTER OF MUSIC PERFORMANCE, ÉCOLE DE MUSIQUE ALAIN-CARON)

Angel Blanco (Master of Music Performance, École de musique Alain-Caron) at the Canadian Heritage Committee

On . See this statement in context (/committees/canadian-heritage/45-1/42/angel-blanco-1/).

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(/committees/canadian-heritage/45-1/42/angel-blanco-1/only/)

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AS SPOKEN

Thank you, Madam Chair and honourable members of the committee.

I sincerely thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. It's a great honour for me to be here.

I appear today both as an independent recording artist and, by choice, representing École de musique Alain-Caron, located in Rivière-du-Loup. I speak from a concrete reality, that of artists working outside major urban centres where talent exists but opportunities remain uneven.

I also appear as an international recording artist who has carried Canada's name abroad, while maintaining a living connection to my Mexican and American heritages. From this experience, I have learned that culture is not a decorative element but the living infrastructure of a country.

The central challenge we face is not the absence of culture but the lack of connection between cultures.

In Canada, indigenous musical traditions remain significantly under-represented in formal educational and institutional contexts, despite being a vital and living part of our collective identity. Across the Americas, these traditions are not only the heritage of long-gone civilizations such as the Inca and Mexica empires, where musical systems were highly developed and formally cultivated, but also living systems of knowledge that continue to involve and inform the present.

At the same time, the continent's musical history is more interconnected than is commonly taught. This includes early forms of transmission and intercultural contact in the 17th century, such as those associated with the Mi'kmaq communities and Grand Chief Membertou. This history is inviting us not to simplify the past but to deepen our understanding of it.

Internationally, we can already see models of integration between tradition and innovation. Countries such as Burkina Faso have developed cultural policies that actively embed local traditions into education, contemporary creation and national identity, showing that tradition and modernity are not opposites but deeply interdependent.

This principle is also reflected in technological innovation in music education. In the United Kingdom, tools such as Soundbeam and the BBC micro:bit demonstrate how music can become accessible, inclusive and creatively empowering from an early age, including for persons with disabilities. These innovations echo earlier visionary work such as the Omnifón, an early didactic synthesizer system, created in 1960 by my compatriot Raúl Pavón Sarrelangue, that anticipated the idea of music technology as an educational and creative tool.

Technology does not replace art. It amplifies it. Canada must continue to develop and support similar initiatives.

However, innovation is not only technological; it is also conceptual.

In this sense, there is a historic opportunity in the development of microtonal music. From the “13th sound” system of Julián Carrillo to the natural system of music of Augusto Novaro and the works of Canadian composer Bruce Mather, a coherent field of sonic exploration emerges that extends beyond experimentation into a genuine line of musical thought.

This body of work should not be treated as an isolated curiosity but as a meaningful contribution to contemporary music language, with clear implications for education, research and artistic creation. We are seeing today a growing presence of this language within Quebec's contemporary music scene.

In this regard, microtonal music offers an opportunity to expand curricula, diversify pedagogical tools and deepen the understanding of sound within our institutions, particularly in Quebec, where interest in these practices already exists.

Finally, as a union member of the American Federation of Musicians, spanning Canada and the United States, I see first-hand how collective organization strengthens cultural ecosystems. Broader co-operation is not abstract; it's structural.

Madam Chair, the next generation of artists does not only need spaces; it needs a connected system. If we align institutions, knowledge, technologies and territories, Canada will not only preserve cultural diversity but build a

living, integrated cultural ecosystem.

A strong society is not sustained by the economy alone. It's also sustained by science, art, sport and philosophy, which are essential pillars of human formation and collective progress.

Thank you for your attention.

See context (/committees/canadian-heritage/45-1/42/angel-blanco-1/) to find out what was said next.

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